

Donneur, A et Pariseau, J., dir. (1989) *Regards sur le système de défense du Canada*. Toulouse, Presses de l'Université d'études politiques de Toulouse, 264 p.

Paul Buteux

Volume 35, numéro 95, 1991

Partenariat et territoire

URI : <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/022208ar>

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.7202/022208ar>

[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

Éditeur(s)

Département de géographie de l'Université Laval

ISSN

0007-9766 (imprimé)

1708-8968 (numérique)

[Découvrir la revue](#)

Citer ce compte rendu

Buteux, P. (1991). Compte rendu de [Donneur, A et Pariseau, J., dir. (1989) *Regards sur le système de défense du Canada*. Toulouse, Presses de l'Université d'études politiques de Toulouse, 264 p.] *Cahiers de géographie du Québec*, 35(95), 488–489. <https://doi.org/10.7202/022208ar>

DONNEUR, A. et PARISEAU, J., dir. (1989) *Regards sur le système de défense du Canada*. Toulouse, Presses de l'Université d'études politiques de Toulouse, 264 p.



This book is unusual in two respects: first, because it represents the only survey of Canadian defence policy currently available in French; and, secondly, because it is directed specifically to an audience in France, the book having been published by the Centre d'Études et de Recherches sur l'Armée at l'Université des sciences sociales de Toulouse. An estimable objective of the volume is to explain to a foreign audience that Canadian defence policy is distinctive, separate from both the United States and Britain, and that it reflects a distinctively Canadian military tradition and political culture. It is worth noting also that this point is worth making for a Canadian audience, since the level of knowledge and interest in matters military among Canadian politicians and the Canadian media is abysmally low.

The scope of the book is an ambitious one, ranging from military history to military sociology and to defence economics. Inevitably in an edited volume, the contributions are uneven in the depth of their analysis and in the range of subject matter. Nonetheless, all the contributions have something to offer the reader, particularly for those who have little knowledge or background in the area. Readers with greater expertise will find little that they did not know in these pages, but they may find interest in some of the recurring themes that appear in the various contributions. Notable in this respect is the discussion of the historical ambivalence towards Canada's armed forces felt by many francophones. Serge Bernier's contribution addresses this issue directly and he underlines the important role of General Allard in bringing about a shift in attitudes and policy in the Canadian armed forces towards bilingualism and the role of francophones in Canada's defence establishment.

Allard's efforts in attempting to make Canada's armed forces more accessible to francophones and to make them more representative of the linguistic make-up of Canada were overshadowed to a considerable extent by the controversies surrounding the unification of Canada's armed forces. Rychard Brule offers a clear and concise account of the background to unification and to what it entailed in terms of the organization of Canada's armed forces. A more critical account of the

---

consequences of this unprecedented and unique military organization would have been welcomed.

Indeed, this is a comment that can be applied to all of the contributions to this volume; they are largely descriptive and weak on analysis and explanation. This is a pity, for the underlying theme of the distinctiveness of Canada's defence policy would have been enhanced by an attempt to relate it to a broader social and political context. André Donneur, in his piece on the relationship between foreign and defence policy, points out the close connections between Canadian foreign and defence policy, and he stresses their characteristic continuity, but even he fails to address the underlying causes of this continuity. Without, I hope, being guilty of criticising a book for being about something other than what it is in fact about, this reviewer feels that an opportunity has been lost to offer an account of Canadian defence policy that is better grounded theoretically.

The remaining substantive chapters in the book include Jean Pariseau's broad synopsis of Canadian military history from the Indian Wars of the French regime to Canada's present peacekeeping activities; this latter topic is addressed specifically in the contribution of Michel Fortmann. Perhaps the most substantial chapter in the book is that by Yves Bélanger and Pierre Fournier which deals with Canada's defence industrial base. It summarizes some of the work undertaken at UQAM by those associated with "le groupe d'étude sur l'industrie militaire et la reconversion" and should serve to introduce these studies to a wider audience. Finally, Richard Evraire's short article on Franco-Canadian military cooperation draws attention to a little known aspect of Canadian defence and foreign policy.

In short, this is a book that probably serves its primary purpose of introducing Canadian defence policy to an audience that knows little or nothing about it. Nonetheless, an opportunity to present a more substantial analysis that would be of interest to a more informed audience has been missed.

**Paul Buteux**  
Programme in Strategic Studies  
University of Manitoba